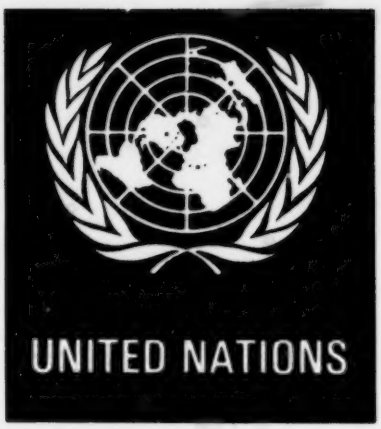

DIVISION FOR
PALESTINIAN RIGHTS

UNITED NATIONS
NORTH AMERICAN NGO SYMPOSIUM
ON THE QUESTION OF PALESTINE

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. The twelfth United Nations North American NGO Symposium on the Question of Palestine was held under the auspices of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, at United Nations Headquarters from 19 to 21 June 1995, pursuant to General Assembly resolutions 49/62 A and B of 14 December 1994. The theme of the Symposium was "The United Nations on its 50th anniversary and the question of Palestine".

2. A total of 73 non-governmental organizations (NGOs) from Canada and the United States participated in the work of the Symposium (23 of them as observers), as well as 10 panelists, who also participated in the workshops as resource persons. Representatives of 11 Governments, 2 intergovernmental organizations and 3 United Nations agencies participated as observers. A delegation of Palestine also attended.

3. The Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People was represented by Mr. Kéba Birane Cissé (Senegal), Chairman; Mr. Bruno Eduardo Rodríguez Parrilla (Cuba), Vice-Chairman; Mr. Ravan A.G. Farhadi (Afghanistan), Vice-Chairman; and Mr. Joseph Cassar (Malta), Rapporteur.

4. The Symposium was opened by Mr. Cissé, who made a statement on behalf of the Committee. Statements were also made by Mr. M. Nasser Al-Kidwa, Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations, who read out a message from Mr. Yasser Arafat, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and Chairman of the Palestinian Authority (see annex II), and by Mr. Larry Ekin, Chairman of the North American Coordinating Committee for NGOs on the Question of Palestine (NACC). The closing meeting was chaired by Mr. Bruno Eduardo Rodríguez Parrilla, (Cuba). The plenaries were chaired by designated NGO representatives.

5. At the first plenary, entitled "Challenges to peace: obstacles and opportunities", three topics were considered: "Jerusalem and the settlements", "The situation of the refugees" and "Securing respect for international humanitarian law". Statements were made by Rev. Alex Awad, lecturer at Bethlehem Bible College and Pastor of the East Jerusalem Baptist Church; Mr. Michael Warshawski, founder and Director of the Alternative Information Centre in Jerusalem; Ms. Leila Zachariah, Executive Director of the Association Najdeh in Beirut; and Mr. Avigdor Feldman, lawyer, human rights activist and one of the founders of B'Tselem.

6. At the second plenary, entitled "Working towards self-determination, promoting civil society", three topics were considered: "Building civil society", "Advancing women's concerns" and "Promoting social development". Statements were made by Mr. Raji Sourani, lawyer and human rights activist; Ms. Suha Hindiyeh-Mani, Director and one of the founders of the Women's Studies Centre in East Jerusalem; and Mr. Shafiq Masalha, clinical psychologist and Acting Director of the Palestinian Counselling Centre in East Jerusalem.

7. At the third plenary, entitled "Continuing commitment of NGOs on the question of Palestine", statements were made by Dr. Haider Abdel Shafi, President of the Red Crescent Society; Mr. Larry Ekin, Chairman of NACC; and Ms. Maria Gazi, Vice-Chairman of the European Coordinating Committee for NGOs on the Question of Palestine.

8. Two sets of four workshops were held on the following topics: (a) "NGO strategy and action": "Refugees and the displaced", "Settlements", "The status of Jerusalem" and "Securing respect for international humanitarian law"; and (b) "Working towards self-determination, promoting civil society": "Palestinian women mobilize", "Promoting civil society", "Development: putting people first" and "Labour in transition". Annex I contains the reports of the workshops. Reports were also submitted by special interest groups, on Jerusalem and on mobilizing the religious community, and a special skills workshop on "Strengthening our NGO ties: the use of electronic networks" was held.

9. A new NACC was elected for the period 1995-1996 at the final session of the Symposium (see annex III).

II. OPENING STATEMENTS

10. In his opening statement, Mr. Kéba Birane Cissé, Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, recalled that the United Nations had been involved since its inception with the question of Palestine. The General Assembly had repeatedly reaffirmed the permanent responsibility of the United Nations with respect to the question until it was resolved in all its aspects in a satisfactory manner in accordance with international legitimacy.

11. The Committee's programme of regional seminars and NGO meetings provided a useful forum for analysis and debate, as well as for educating public opinion. The Committee, in adopting its programme for 1995, had decided to focus on certain priority tasks, in particular: promoting support for the ongoing peace process and subsequent implementation agreements, and monitoring developments in order to promote the effective implementation of the agreements reached; promoting international assistance to the Palestinian people for immediate relief and for nation-building; and encouraging constructive consideration and debate of major issues to be negotiated at a later stage. Mr. Cissé informed participants of the meetings to be held under the auspices of the Committee during the year, as well as the activities of the Division for Palestinian Rights, including progress made in the computer-based United Nations Information System on the Question of Palestine (UNISPAL).

12. Mr. Cissé reaffirmed that the role of the international community, including NGOs, in support of the Palestinian people remained of great importance during this period of transition. It was critical to help correct the power imbalance between the parties and to promote a solution based on international legitimacy.

13. While welcoming the progress made in the peace process, the Committee had expressed great concern at the delays in the implementation of the agreements reached and the slowness of progress towards the next stage of transition, as well as the acts of violence by those seeking to undermine the peace process and the continued expansion of settlements around Jerusalem and in the West Bank.

14. **Mr. Larry Ekin**, Chairman of NACC, said that the problem of scarce resources should never be used as an excuse for inaction. Rather, it should encourage NGOs to find ways to support each other's work.

15. He stressed that there should be a peaceful negotiated settlement of the Palestinian question, that both Israelis and Palestinians had the right to live securely within well-defined borders and that human rights should be respected.

16. **Mr. Abdelaziz Aboughosh**, Assistant Secretary-General of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, said that a major obstacle to the peace process was the continuation of the Israeli policy of building and enlarging settlements in the occupied territories, especially in and around the city of Al-Quds al-Sharif, aiming at downsizing the Holy City and changing its Arab-Islamic character. He stressed the need to achieve tangible progress on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks and to ensure Israeli withdrawal from the Golan to the pre-1967 lines as well as from the occupied Lebanese territories. He appealed to the international community to support the Palestinian Authority in order to remove the effects of occupation and rebuild the Palestinian institutions and economy.

III. PLENARY DISCUSSION

A. Plenary 1. Challenges to peace: obstacles and opportunities

Jerusalem and the settlements

17. **Rev. Alex Awad**, lecturer at Bethlehem Bible College and Pastor of the East Jerusalem Baptist Church, said that the stated goal of many Israeli Government officials for a united Jerusalem to be the eternal capital of the State of Israel would only bring sorrow and new rounds of armed conflict. Israel should realize that Jerusalem did not belong only to the Jewish people. This policy posed a direct challenge to millions of Muslims and Christians around the world and in the Middle East. The real design behind land confiscation and the building of Jewish settlements in Arab East Jerusalem was political. The aim was to enlarge the Jewish population to such vast proportions that the Arab community would be swallowed up and reduced to a minority.

18. Currently over 150,000 Jews lived in Jerusalem, Mr. Awad said. The municipal borders of the city of Jerusalem had been expanded from 38,000 to 110,000 dunums. The total land confiscated in Arab East Jerusalem from 1967 to the present was 24,000 dunums and on that land 35,000 units had been built for Jewish settlers only.

19. Although Israeli leaders claimed that Jerusalem was an open city for members of three religions, their practices and policies meant religious suffocation and liquidation of the Christian and Islamic presence in Jerusalem. Since 1967, the Israeli Government had not allowed any Christian denomination to build a church structure in East Jerusalem.

20. **Mr. Michael Warshawski**, founder and Director of the Alternative Information Centre, reviewed what had happened concerning the settlements since the signing of the Declaration of Principles.

21. Despite a letter of guarantee, construction had continued in the settlements, with hundreds of units being built in Psagot, Kiryat, Sefer and Ariel, under the pretext that these were already planned before September 1993. The concept of Greater Jerusalem was used in order to justify the construction of more than 9,500 housing units in Maaleh Adumin, Beitar, Efrat, Har Adar and Givat Zeev.

22. In "annexed Jerusalem" the Government had accelerated construction in order to create the maximum amount of facts on the ground before negotiations on Jerusalem began. In the last two years more than 8,000 housing units had been built in the settlements of Pisgat Zeev, Reches Shuafat and Ramot, in East Jerusalem. In July, work would start in Jabal Abu Gheim in southern

annexed Jerusalem on the first part of a new Jewish settlement, Har Homa, which was scheduled to have 40,000 residents by the year 2005.

23. There were now "expropriations for peace", he said. Thousands of dunums had been confiscated during the previous 10 months to build new military camps and training areas, as well as by-pass roads aimed at connecting most of the settlements to Israel.

24. Mr. Warshawski said that under Israeli policy most of the settlements would remain under Israeli sovereignty. This would destroy the territorial integrity of the West Bank. In his view, the so-called isolated settlements which are in the midst of densely populated Palestinian areas would be used as bargaining chips in the negotiations due to begin in 1996.

25. In conclusion, he mentioned that the population of El Khader village provided a good example of what should be done in order to fight the settlement policy of the Israeli Government. They had stopped the Israeli bulldozers with their own bodies and they had called on the Israeli peace forces to express their active solidarity.

The situation of the refugees

26. **Ms. Leila Zachariah**, Executive Director of the Association Najdeh in Beirut, said that since the uprooting and exile of Palestinians in 1948, the United Nations had adopted resolutions on four interrelated issues of vital concern to the Palestinian people: the right of return to their land; the provision of humanitarian assistance and basic services; recognition of Palestinian national rights; and affirmation that the solution of the Palestinian question should be based on the right of return and the right of self-determination.

27. The political weight and dimension of the Palestinian refugee problem was underlined by the fact that Palestinians in exile made up 58 per cent of the total Palestinian population (over six million) and 56 per cent of the population inside the occupied territories. There were three million Palestine refugees registered with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA): 37.8 per cent lived in the West Bank and Gaza, 39.7 per cent in Jordan, 11.2 per cent in Lebanon, and 10.9 per cent in the Syrian Arab Republic.

28. Refugees were denied the right to work for political reasons. In Lebanon, 20,000-30,000 work permits were issued to foreigners, but only 300 were given to Palestinians. Israel had consistently refused to recognize the right of return and had called for the resettlement of refugees in Arab countries, while the United States refused the Palestinian right to self-determination and since 1993 had withdrawn its endorsement of General Assembly resolution 194 (III).

29. In addition, the political dimension of the refugee question had been omitted and/or deferred at every level of the Middle East negotiating process, both at bilateral and multilateral levels, as well as in the peace agreements reached with Israel by the Palestinians and the Jordanians.

30. The deferral strategy paved the way for creating irrevocable facts that eliminated the refugee problem through abandoning international legality, permanently fragmenting the Palestinian national entity, and resolving the refugee question on the basis of resettlement, and through absorption and transfer, excluding return or citizenship in the future Palestinian State.

31. In Ms. Zachariah's view, the refugee question had been depoliticized. The Multilateral Refugee Working Group (MRWG) would not accept General Assembly resolution 194 (III) as the basis for negotiations; by implication, the refugee question was transformed into a regional Arab-Israeli issue encompassing all regional refugee questions; the Oslo-Cairo accord made no reference to any United Nations resolution on the refugee question, which was deferred to the final negotiations; the Jordanian-Israeli peace agreement considered the refugees as a humanitarian problem for both sides and deferred it to the MRWG; on the political level, it proposed the resettlement and absorption of the 1948 refugees, in violation of resolution 194 (III), and it also abandoned Security Council resolution 237 (1967), which guaranteed the unconditional return of the Palestinian refugees of 1967. Left hanging, 200,000 displaced Palestinians resided in Jordan without political rights.

32. Based on the Declaration of Principles, the discontinuance of UNRWA would be inevitable and would mean a humanitarian catastrophe for three million refugees. In the West Bank and Gaza 35 per cent of the refugees lived below the poverty line, and in Lebanon, 60 per cent.

33. In conclusion, Ms. Zachariah pointed out that the international community was on the verge of allowing the repetition of the error committed in 1948. The United Nations remained the guardian of Palestinian rights. NGOs could play a vital role by campaigning with Palestinian NGOs and by lobbying their Governments to ensure implementation of United Nations resolutions on the right of return and continued operation and increased funding of UNRWA.

Securing respect for international humanitarian law

34. **Mr. Avigdor Feldman**, lawyer and one of the founders of B'Tselem, said that aside from the fact that Israel did not recognize the Fourth Geneva Convention, the Hague regulations or any other norms that dealt with the occupied territories, the normative structure of occupation through the international legal system was inadequate because it dealt only with short-term occupation and with military occupation. Moreover, humanitarian law did not deal specifically with settlements, which had introduced a new element in the occupation and had resulted in the creation of a dual legal system based on inequality.

35. The Israeli Supreme Court, during all these years, had refused to give any ruling about the legality of the Jewish settlements in the occupied territories. That showed the urgent need to actually review the humanitarian law in regard to a lengthy occupation. Since even only one settlement would require a separate legal system, not one settlement should be left in the occupied territories.

36. Mr. Feldman also spoke about the situation following the Declaration of Principles with regard to three main issues: Jerusalem, the occupied territories, and Gaza and Jericho.

37. He said that Israel had annexed Jerusalem and did not consider it subject to humanitarian law. In his view, the decision now to freeze further expropriation around Jerusalem was fragile, and it would be revoked with time because of political considerations. The situation in the occupied territories had already been referred to as "expropriation for peace". Settlements had resulted in the creation of a double system of roads, places and legal situation. Two communities were living side by side, one the beneficiary of resources, money and roads and the other subordinated economically, socially and politically. He felt that present agreements were in Israel's interest because they did not fundamentally change this state of affairs. Mr Feldman expressed concern over what would happen in Gaza and Jericho because of the lack of judicial review of arbitrary arrest and the reintroduction of capital punishment. The new situation presented a very difficult challenge to humanitarian law. He called on the Palestinian Authority to look into the matter.

B. Plenary II. Working towards self-determination, promoting civil society

Building civil society

38. **Mr. Raji Sourani**, lawyer and human rights activist, said that the essential nature of the Israeli occupation remained unchanged and the economic and political situation had not improved. There were at present in the Gaza Strip the same number of troops as before the transfer of responsibility to the Palestinian police. The Israeli military courts continued to try Palestinians arrested by Israeli forces, and undercover operations appeared to be increasing. In addition, over 5,000 prisoners were still held in Israel.

39. In controlling overall security, Israel was able to maintain the economic stranglehold it had over the self-rule areas. Israeli troops cut off the Gaza Strip from Egypt, Israel, the Mediterranean, and the West Bank. Within the area, Israeli checkpoints isolated one population centre from another.

40. The number of workers travelling from the Gaza Strip into Israel had dropped successively from 85,000 before the *intifadah* to 10,000 at present; as a result, unemployment was currently at 60 per cent and rising. The occupation limited the potential productive power of the area and limited the amount and types of goods which could be exported. The Palestinian Authority had been denied the power to control imports. The Israeli occupying forces held about 40 per cent of the land in the Gaza Strip and much of this land was the most fertile. At the same time, the Israeli Water Authority had bored wells 500 meters deep in the settlements. This had a tremendous impact on potential agricultural output. Other traditional industries also faced curbs; for example, the use of maritime areas had been severely restricted.

41. In order to guarantee Israeli security, Israel had pressured the Palestinian Authority into employing Draconian measures, such as the arrests campaigns and the trials by the State Security Court, without a judicial mechanism of scrutiny and accountability. These measures and the worsening of the economic crisis had created a backlash against Israel, the peace process and the Palestinian Authority. However, the Authority was the national authority of Palestinians, and NGOs should engage in dialogue with it.

42. Mr. Sourani said that the peace accords had created an imbalance in the bargaining power of the parties. Even if the latest deadline for negotiations on the West Bank was met, it would not fundamentally alter the nature of power. The occupied territories would be separated into five "Bantustans": the Gaza Strip, Jericho, North West Bank, South West Bank and Jerusalem. The Palestinian Authority would have only partial control, with overall control and power resting with Israel and its occupying forces.

43. Mr. Sourani concluded by saying that the international community, while ready to support the development of civil society, was still hesitant to recognize that only providing for genuine self-determination would allow Palestinians to build a strong, democratic, pluralistic civil society based on respect for human rights and the rule of law. That inalienable right had to be achieved for results to be more than superficial.

Advancing women's concerns

44. **Ms. Suha Hindiyeh-Mani**, Director and one of the founders of the Women's Studies Centre, East Jerusalem, said that the discussion on advancing women's concerns at this stage in Palestinian history was crucial for gender relations in the coming period. It was vital to push for laws governing women's full participation in society.

45. Occupation policies had affected gender relations in Palestinian society. The involvement of women in the national liberation movement, which placed them under additional burdens, might have given the impression that women had gained some degree of manoeuvrability and freedom. Consequently, the Palestinian women's movement at this stage was in a dilemma as to how to transform women's participation at the national political level into gender political achievements. In light of the peace negotiations, women had turned their attention to skills and leadership training in order to attain full participation.

46. Four major debates were identified within the women's movement: first, the question of women's participation in the elections and the possibility of establishing a quota system which, although controversial, could be a better solution at this stage because of the different trends in politics; secondly, the issue of governance, i.e., whether the Women's Affairs Bureau should be part of the Authority or should work as a pressure group; thirdly, highlighting gender planning in non-governmental and governmental organizations, which would lead to women's empowerment if both the practical and the strategic gender needs were interconnected; and fourthly, the debate on democracy. Democracy and the building of civil society were a guarantee of women's equality.

47. Despite the significance of these debates, women's direct concerns should also be addressed, primarily women's involvement in the economy and human resource development, for more effective involvement of women in the decision-making process at the governmental level. According to the World Bank, structural adjustment policies were now in effect in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Those policies encouraged expansion of and investment in the private sector, marginalizing women on a larger scale in the formal and informal sectors and causing more exploitation.

48. Ms. Hindiyeh-Mani said that a comprehensive gender-awareness approach for a social development programme was needed. This required economic legislation that protected women. The legislation should include gender-awareness labour laws, support for women in the informal sector and availability of infrastructural elements for integrating women in the development process.

Promoting social development

49. **Mr. Shafiq Masalha**, clinical psychologist and Acting Director of the Palestinian Counselling Centre in East Jerusalem, said that the fact that Palestinian people had never had the chance to rule themselves had serious ramifications, especially social and psychological. The Israeli military occupation had determined every aspect of Palestinian life. The *intifadah* was responsible for empowering the Palestinian people, both psychologically and politically. The social structure of Palestinian society, the family and clan were still strong enough to seriously influence the life of individuals, a phenomenon which should be taken into account in the building of any Palestinian civil society.

50. Mr. Masalha pointed out the challenges in promoting social development. Psychologically, in a process of transition, there was a demand for a new maturity and self-determination. Socially, Palestinian society faced the challenge of how to establish a society that incorporated its previous social traditions into the framework of a modern civil society. In order to build a civil society, the Palestinian Authority should support all Palestinian NGOs which struggle to preserve human rights. The role of those organizations should not diminish after the Israeli occupation ended. The accumulated experience of the NGOs was set without any overall plan; there was now a need for evaluation and for coordination, so as to avoid duplication. Democratic channels should be established and should become the only avenue for every individual and group to express ideas and criticism. Pluralism. tolerance, and democracy were the best insurance in the process of building a Palestinian civil society.

C. Plenary III. Continuing commitment of NGOs on the question of Palestine

51. **Mr. Haider Abdel Shafi**, President of the Red Crescent Society, said that the problem of peace in the Middle East stemmed from the illegal Zionist claim to all Palestinian territory and the refusal to recognize the reality of the Palestinian national entity. Violence on the Palestinian side was in many ways an unavoidable response to the Israeli position.

52. At present, the United States considered the occupied territories as disputed rather than occupied, and refused to adopt a principled position in regard to settlement activity and Jerusalem. The European countries had an attitude of verbal support without action. The euphoria surrounding the Oslo Agreement ignored its glaring defects which were: failure to challenge Israel's ongoing settlement policy, subjection of the election process to Israeli interference, and the fact that many articles in the agreement were open to different interpretations. By continuing its settlement policies, Israel retained jurisdiction over a substantial portion of the territory under the pretext of security requirements.

53. The military had withdrawn from the populated areas, but some roads in the Gaza Strip and substantial stretches of the seashore remained out of bounds for Palestinians. Thus Palestinians ended up with restricted movement both within the Gaza Strip and outside. The burden of economic hardship remained the same. Israel took advantage of Hamas military resistance to resort to extreme measures, mainly restriction of movement of personnel and commodities.

54. Aside from Israel's premeditated obstruction, the performance of the Palestinian Authority, facing all these difficulties, left much to be desired, especially in the domain of human rights and the pressing need for management. NGOs should now focus on the issue of development, which would empower Palestinians to build a civil society. NGOs should also focus on the needs of Palestinian children, who comprised 50 per cent of the population.

55. In his view it was time now for a new approach based on effective coordination and cooperation with Palestinian NGOs, which should proceed on three levels: material support; a public relations campaign to inform people about the realities of the peace problem in the area; and a plan of activities that could help to change the attitude of apathy vis-à-vis Israeli intransigence and violation of international principles.

56. **Mr. Larry Ekin**, Chairman of NACC, examined the context for NGO work in North America. In general, NGOs faced declining resources, greater competition for donor dollars, and the need to deliver more services for less money. At the same time, important differences remained affecting United States and Canadian NGOs in regard to their respective Governments and policies. In general, the Canadian Government remained more accessible, continued to be more directly involved in refugee questions, and adhered to its practice of supporting Palestinian NGOs directly as well as providing support to the Palestinian Authority.

57. In the United States, developments had generally failed to bear out the euphoria and heightened expectations that followed the signing of the Declaration of Principles. The overall political climate remained largely hostile as shown by the recent United States veto in the Security Council, the Senate Majority Leader's initiative to force the United States to relocate its embassy, and measures that were being considered that would make it harder to provide any kind of United States Government assistance to the Palestinian Authority.

58. He acknowledged Mr. Haidar Abdel Shafi's challenge that, to date, the NGOs had been unable to fundamentally affect United States policy. Consequently, NGOs should find ways, even with the current difficulties, to step up their advocacy work. He agreed on the need to strengthen relations with Palestinian NGOs, not only on a bilateral basis, but also among various coordinating bodies. He called for NGOs to improve their ability to share reliable information and for continuing material aid and support. NGOs should continue to act as a voice of conscience.

59. **Ms. Maria Gazi**, Vice-Chairman of the European Coordinating Committee for NGOs on the Question of Palestine (ECCP), said the European NGOs had managed to reopen the European Coordinating Committee office in Brussels. A coordinated European campaign was needed to focus on the following issues: the right of return, the status of Jerusalem, the unconditional release of all political prisoners, and the cessation of expansion and building of settlements.

60. Among recent activities was an ECCP meeting in Jerusalem at which the NGOs had drafted a memorandum describing the current situation, which was addressed to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the European Governments and the members of the European Parliament. At the annual general assembly of the NGO Liaison Committee, ECCP was able to table a relevant motion which was adopted by more than 700 European NGOs and sent to all relevant European institutions. In May, with the help of the Network of European NGOs in the Occupied Territories, a meeting was held in Jerusalem which brought together Palestinian and European NGOs represented in the occupied territories. The aim was the preparation of papers to be presented by Palestinian NGOs at the forthcoming International NGO Meeting/European NGO Symposium to be held at Vienna from 29 August to 1 September 1995.

IV. CLOSING STATEMENTS

61. **Mr. Larry Ekin**, Chairman of NACC, said that the discussions over the past few days had been a source of inspiration which would both inform and invigorate the work of the North American NGOs. The Symposium represented yet another tangible commitment on the part of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People to do all it could to proceed with the work that was their common endeavour.

62. **Rev. Ibrahim Ayad**, President of the Palestine Committee for NGOs, said that the Palestinian problem was at the core of all problems in the Middle East. Solution of the conflict had been left to power and force rather than right and justice. United States policies in the Middle East were biased. He cited the veto of the Security Council draft resolution on the confiscation by Israel of Arab land in East Jerusalem as an encouragement to Israel to be expansionist.

63. After four years of the United States-sponsored peace process, the Palestinian people had not experienced any significant change in their situation, and "self-rule" was becoming a state of siege. The confiscation of Palestinian land was continuing and had even accelerated; when the final stage for the negotiations was reached, there would be nothing left to negotiate.

64. **Mr. Nasser Al-Kidwa**, Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations, said more struggle was required to achieve peace, leaving an important role for the NGOs. The PLO remained committed to the peace process and the implementation of the agreements reached. The international community should apply pressure on their Governments to ensure implementation.

65. The Observer Mission was committed to the permanent responsibility of the United Nations regarding the question of Palestine and to the provisions of relevant Security Council and General Assembly resolutions. On that basis, it remained committed to retaining the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People.

66. Mr. Al-Kidwa said that although he differed with much that had been said during the Symposium, he had great respect for the points of view expressed. The original purpose of the forum should not be lost, namely, that of supporting the movement of solidarity with the Palestinian people in their efforts to establish their rights and their own State, with Jerusalem as its capital.

67. **Mr. Bruno Eduardo Rodríguez Parrilla**, Acting Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, said that, in this fiftieth anniversary year of the United Nations, it was important to reaffirm, as the General Assembly had repeatedly done, that the United Nations had a permanent responsibility with respect to the question of Palestine until the question was resolved in all its aspects. The Committee would continue to monitor the situation on the ground and to bring new developments affecting Palestinian rights to the attention of the international community.

68. The deliberations had shown that the United Nations system, the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian people and the NGO community had critical roles to play at this crucial juncture in the peace process and during this period of reconstruction and nation-building.

ANNEX I

Workshop reports

A. NGO Strategy and action

Workshop 1. Refugees and the displaced

The workshop opened with a statement by Ms. Leila Zakhariah on the situation of the refugees and displaced. The report was drafted by Mr. Taleb Salhab, of the Palestine Aid Society. Participants in the workshop expressed support for the following principles:

1. Ensuring the implementation of United Nations resolutions on the question of Palestine, with the right of return at its forefront;

2. Ensuring UNRWA's continuing operation and the extension of its mandate until the settlement of the question of Palestine refugees by calling upon their Governments to increase funding for UNRWA's regular programme;

3. Supporting the Palestinians as a whole, and refugees in particular, in exercising the right to shape their own future through participating in a referendum under United Nations auspices;

4. Guaranteeing protection of the political, civil, and human rights of Palestinians under occupation and in exile;

5. Supporting Palestinian NGOs in responding to the immediate social development needs of Palestine refugees;

6. Refugees inside Israel should have the same rights as other refugees, and their problems should not be considered separately;

7. North American NGOs should work to strengthen ties and communication among existing NGOs working on Palestine refugees issues.

Participants drafted the following communiqué with regard to UNRWA:

"This Conference notes that until General Assembly resolution 194 (III) is fully implemented, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency discharged a vital role in sustaining the welfare of over 3 million Palestinian refugees.

"It remained the permanent responsibility of the international community to maintain UNRWA's mandate until there was a permanent and comprehensive resolution of the Palestinian question. Of special importance was the full funding of regular programmes in health, education, and shelter. To this end, it is urged that all appropriately placed NGOs and Palestinian representatives bring the findings of this Symposium and the significance of resolution 194 (III) to the attention of major organizations, including the Organization of African Unity, the European Community, the Organization of American States, representatives of Asian and Pacific nations, the League of Arab States, the Organization of the Islamic Conference, the Association of South-East Asian Nations, and the Group of 77.

"As North American NGOs, we commit ourselves to affirm the work of UNRWA and to lobby our Governments in Canada and the United States to that effect."

Workshop 2: Settlements

The workshop had the participation of Mr. Michael Warshawski and Mr. Haider Abdel Shafi. The following report, drafted by Ms. Tamara Kohns, of American Jewish Alternatives to Zionism, Inc., was issued:

"The framework of the discussion is the recognition of the responsibilities and opportunities we, as non-governmental organizations, have during this exceedingly pivotal and fragile period of struggle for what remains of the possibility of achieving a modicum of justice for Palestinians and Palestine.

"As was forcefully and succinctly put before us in the first panel's presentation, the current political reality is clearly characterized by the elimination from official consideration, for an undefined period, of most of the essential questions, elements and problems that need to be dealt with in order for a real Palestinian State to come into existence in Palestine. By Israeli design, the door is thus left wide open for Israel to use this historical opportunity to continue and perhaps even complete the Judaization and Bantustanization of Palestine. This process is the hallmark of Israel's modus operandi.

"We identified and discussed, in some detail, the following interrelated issues which are currently prohibited from official discussion:

"(a) The unabated and rapidly escalating land confiscation and settlement in this era which has been designated as the time of "Land for Peace";

"(b) The Israeli use of the so-called Greater Jerusalem, an area which has no juridical or geographic existence or definition, as a tool for this land confiscation and settlement and, therefore, conceivably, for the last steps of the transformation of Palestine (except for Gaza) into Israel;

"(c) The various aspects of the question of refugees, whether internal or in the Palestinian diaspora; and

"(d) The question of the 6,000-7,000 Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails.

"Based on the preceding, and informed by the current activities and work of NACC, the recommendations of the settlements workshop to our NGO colleagues of North America and Europe are that we frame our work in the following terms:

"(a) Insistence on a freeze on all new settlements, on all enlargements of existing settlements and on all construction of Israeli infrastructure in the 1967 occupied territories;

"(b) Recognition of the centrality of the multifaceted question of Jerusalem to any meaningful and just solution of the question of Palestine;

"(c) Continued vigorous support for the fundamental rights of all refugees, including, but not exclusively, the right of all refugees to return to their homeland, and,

"(d) Insistence on the release from Israeli prisons of all Palestine political prisoners.

"Our recommendation is that this work should be done in coordination with and with the support of the existing NGOs on the ground in Palestine."

Workshop 3. The status of Jerusalem

The workshop had the Rev. Alex Awad as a resource person. The following report was drafted by Mr. Peter Lems, of the Association of Arab-American University Graduates:

" Discussion focused on resources and conferences that are currently available, in particular, a video with accompanying documentation from the Housing Rights Movement on Jerusalem. The documentation was designed to address two issues: a report that substantiates the issues that are depicted in the video, and an alternative report, to be submitted to the United Nations, examining Israel's compliance with the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. The second report was a result of deliberations at the Eleventh United Nations North American NGO Symposium on the Question of Palestine, held at Toronto from 6 to 8 July 1994. A screening committee was appointed to steer the report through the United Nations committee.

"Some of the action points adopted were:

"(a) Coordinated release of the documentary film with accompanying documentation;

"(b) Increased outreach to the religious community;

"(c) Encouragement of tourism and delegations;

"(d) Increased use of the fax-tree;

"(e) Campaign against moving the United States Embassy to Jerusalem. It was resolved to work with the Palestinian NGOs and promote the work on the ground. We affirmed the principle that Jerusalem is an integral part of Palestine."

Workshop 4: Securing respect for international humanitarian law

Mr. Avigdor Feldman was the resource person for this workshop. The following report was drafted by Mr. John Ihnat, of the Canadian Council of Churches.

"Several critical issues were identified which were relevant to the topic at hand, and we proposed several recommendations for the solidarity work of the North American NGOs.

"The most salient point raised was that what the so-called "peace" process has established, in part through the failure of Israel to uphold its responsibilities outlined in the Declaration of Principles, is an apartheid system in the occupied Palestinian territories, where there are two laws, one for illegal Israeli colonists, another for Palestinians. Because of that fact, there is a full range of human rights violations. Palestinians have been subjected to these human rights violations both by the Israeli occupiers and by the Palestinian Authority. Related issues include the following:

"(a) The 6,000-7,000 Palestinian prisoners, 1,600 of whom are under life sentences, together with the unprecedented disregard by Israel for international law, which calls for the release or transfer of political prisoners to the relevant authorities;

"(b) The practice of torture, both by Israel, with its hidden regulations on interrogation methods, and by the Palestinian Authority;

"(c) House demolitions, and Israel's new legal strategy for justifying the demolitions, which moves away from an ostensible concern for 'security', to the violation of housing laws;

"(d) Refugees, both inside and outside of Palestine;

"(e) The confusing array of laws applicable to Palestinians, which vary and are inconsistent across the different regions of Palestine;

"(f) The lack of judicial review of arrest procedures in the Palestinian Authority;

"(g) The establishment by the Palestinian Authority of the State Security Court. Concern was expressed over the possible activation of the military law sanctioning capital punishment;

"(h) The rights of both Palestinian Authority and Israeli-ruled Palestinians;

"(i) Recognition that the Fourth Geneva Convention and other international law will continue to apply to the `question of Palestine' regardless of the agreements signed between Israel and the PLO.

"Recommendations for the North American NGO solidarity work:

"1. Highlight relevant issues in our respective NGOs' internal publications, in any publications to which we have access, and through the electronic networks. Essentially, we recommend that North American NGOs publicize the reality on the ground in Palestine and Israel as widely as possible;

"2. Publicize what international law requires and how Israeli and Palestinian Authority actions violate those laws. We recommend that NACC prepare a short bibliography of the relevant documents of international law;

"3. Try to understand the real world system - what economic and political interests are conditioning disregard for international law and basic human dignity in the world - and then communicate this understanding to the North American public;

"4. Since it was understood that this 'peace process' can more accurately be described as an apartheid installation process, we should seek out documentation that clinches the case for the apartheid analogy, and publicize it in North America;

"5. Put pressure on government structures such as parliaments, human rights departments and public representatives. Seek out other non-governmental structures such as human rights organizations;

"6. Encourage exposure visits to Palestine and Israel which could enable participants to share their experiences with the North American public;

"7. Link Palestinian issues to issues which are important to the North American public in order to attract more attention and interest. For example, the family reunification activities in the occupied Palestinian territories can be linked with women's issues. Palestinian prisoners' rights issues can be linked with prisoners' rights issues in North America. The question of United States aid to Israel can be linked with information about Israeli human rights abuses; the American people might be interested in what their taxpayers' subsidy to Israel is supporting;

"8. We recommend that North American NGOs be encouraged to make direct contact with relevant Israeli and Palestinian human rights agencies and support and participate in the NACC's Action Alert Network."

B. Working towards self-determination, promoting civil society

Workshop 1: Palestinian women mobilize

Ms. Suha Hindiyeh-Mani was the resource person. The following report was drafted by Ms. Jane Wolf, of the Episcopal Church-USA.

"The workshop participants recommended:

"1. That gender be incorporated in every issue presented for discussion at the North American NGO Symposium on the Question of Palestine, for gender cannot be separated from other issues, such as labour and civil society;

"2. That guidelines for papers submitted to the Symposium indicate that the papers must have a gender element;

"3. That NGOs support projects that lead to capacity-building and the empowerment of women in the occupied territories;

"4. That projects funded by foreign NGOs reflect the priorities and needs of Palestinian women;

"5. That NGOs pressure their Governments to have Israel lift the occupation of Palestine, as there can be no lasting improvement and empowerment for women so long as there is occupation.

"The workshop participants also recommended that NGOs respond to the negative impact of structural adjustment policies on Palestinian women by:

"1. Supporting groups lobbying the Palestinian Authority on structural adjustment issues;

"2. Assisting in the identification and development of other sources of funding besides the International Monetary Fund and World Bank;

"3. Supporting Palestinian and other women's efforts to address the issues of structural adjustment at the Fourth World Conference on Women, to be held at Beijing this year.

"It was also recommended that NGOs support the NACC Women's Resource Directory as an important networking, educational and information resource for individuals and groups involved in addressing the priorities and needs of Palestinian women."

Workshop 2: Promoting civil society

Mr. Raji Sourani was the resource person. The following report was drafted by Mr. Peter Lems, of the Association of Arab-American University Graduates.

"The workshop started with discussions about the history of the Palestinian NGOs and the crucial role they have played in supporting Palestinian society. Particular emphasis was given to the medical, agricultural, and human rights NGOs that are involved in filling the vacuum of a stateless population.

"Attention was given to the evolving relationship with the Palestinian Authority. In particular, the importance of coordinating the work of NGOs was stressed.

"The following recommendations for action were made:

"1. NGOs should encourage North American funding institutions to take more responsibility for the way they fund projects. They must not dictate the programmes, but support existing programmes that have been helpful and successful;

"2. NGOs must provide information on the situation, focusing on human rights issues and political developments;

"3. NGOs should coordinate with the Palestinian NGO networking committee in Gaza and the West Bank;

"4. NGOs should focus on ongoing programmes and not allow themselves to just respond to urgent action alerts;

"5. NGOs must develop reachable goals;

"6. NGOs must develop some relationship with the Palestinian Authority and promote and protect the Palestinian NGOs.

"Other recommendations included building civil society in the diaspora, exchanging resources and establishing new NGOs."

Workshop 3: Development: putting people first

Mr. Shafiq Masalha and Ms. Leila Zachariah were the resource persons. The report was drafted by Ms. Tamara Kohns, of the American Jewish Alternatives to Zionism.

The following recommendations were made:

"1. Strengthening of relations between Palestinian NGOs and the NACC;

"2. Support for linkages among Palestinian NGOs working in the occupied territories, Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic and Jordan;

"3. Re-establishment of a standing committee under the auspices of the NACC to act as a link to Palestinian NGOs working in development;

"4. Advocacy for changes in the World Bank's policies of structural adjustment as they concern Palestine;

"5. Advocacy also for the use of World Bank funds to finance social development programmes through NGOs;

"6. Support for NGOs working to end domestic violence, illiteracy, the marginalization of women, and the sense of hopelessness prevalent in the Palestinian society;

"7. Greater emphasis on training programmes, especially those in the field of education, including training personnel to be counselors and special educators, continuing education for teachers and programmes which lead to the use of curricula and teaching methodologies encouraging the democratization of Palestinian society;

"8. Support for economic development initiatives in Palestine on a grass-roots basis in order to raise local living standards;

"9. Encouragement of in-country fund-raising efforts to help finance social services through NGOs with the purpose of engendering a sense of Palestinian ownership;

"10. Enhancement of education efforts in communities in Canada and the United States to create an awareness of the continuing bleak realities on the ground in the Middle East and the necessity of maintaining support for NGOs working on behalf of the Palestinian people, and

"11. More effective mobilization of Palestinians living in Canada and the United States in order to strengthen their support of Palestinian NGOs."

Workshop 4: Labour in transition

Mr. Hassan Barghouti was the resource person. The report was drafted by Mr. Subbi Alwan, of the Canadian Autoworkers Social Justice Fund.

Mr. Barghouti gave a briefing on the Democracy and Workers' Rights Center. The center was established in October 1993 by some labour activists and academics, and has as its main objectives providing legal representation in defence of workers' rights and educating the work force in the West Bank and Gaza.

"A wide-ranging discussion session followed. Key themes included:

"1. The ongoing violations of labour laws by Israeli employers; health and safety violations in the work place; how Palestinians are mistreated, misrepresented and dismissed from their jobs because of their political affiliation;

"2. The social and economic effects of the border closures on the Palestinian workers and their families;

"3. The Israeli importation of about 71,000 migrant workers from China, Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey, and the resulting displacement of about 61,000 Palestinian workers;

"4. The existing labour laws in the West Bank and Gaza;

"5. The fact that the minimum wage for Israelis was about $550 per month and that of Palestinians was about $200 per month;

"6. The fact that industrial zones were being set up on the borders between Israel and the occupied territories, so that instead of training the Palestinian workers, Israeli employers would hire highly skilled Israeli workers and exploit Palestinian low-skilled labourers;

"7. The charge that the Palestinian Federation of Trade Unions (PFTU) was controlled by/divided along the lines of political factions which discouraged most workers from getting involved in union activities or questioning PFTU and its leadership. Mr. Barghouti suggested that PFTU break away from the Palestinian Authority in order to establish its independence and concentrate on fighting for workers' rights.

"He expressed the view that Palestinian workers should become involved in PFTU which would help strengthen the peace process, and he made the following recommendations:

"1. Encourage active labour support from North American unions;

"2. Put pressure on the Coordinating Committee of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions to coordinate overseas delegation visits, labour project sponsorships, etc.;

"3. Put pressure on Israel to implement the economic protocol agreement;

"4. Give workers the opportunity to return to their work places in Israel;

"5. Maximize the capacity of Palestinian industrial schemes in order to create more jobs, i.e. give Palestinians more freedom of export and import and establish links with Israeli and other markets;

"6. Increase the permitted fishing area in the Gaza Strip;

"7. Develop the agricultural sector and expand the cultivated areas;

"8. International unions and individual union activists throughout the world should put pressure on the political factions to unite."

Special Interest Groups

Jerusalem and rapid response network

A special report was presented by Mr. Awad Mansour, of the Palestine Housing Rights Movement, and was drafted by Mr. Peter Lems, of the Association of Arab-American University Graduates, reaffirming the centrality of Jerusalem and relevant United Nations resolutions. In response, a committee was established to standardize and institutionalize a project mechanism.

The feasibility of an urgent fax network aimed at government officials was discussed. This network would be supported by subscribers who automatically would endorse letters of protest. Organizational support would be coordinated by:

1. Grassroots International
2. Palestine Human Rights Campaign - Georgia
3. Palestinian Mother's and Child's Care Society
4. Council for the National Interest
5. Association of Arab-American University Graduates.

Mobilizing the Religious Community

The report of this special interest group was submitted by Ms. Shirley Stevens, of the Methodist Federation for Social Action.

"Members of the Mobilizing the Religious Community group brought several concerns including:

"1. Interfaith dialogue both in North America and Palestine;

"2. How to get constituents to listen to and accept what is perceived as anti-Jewish information;

"3. The growth of anti-Muslim sentiment;

"4. The need to counter the strong presence of the Christian right in the United States, especially considering that group's blatant support of Israel as indicated, for example, by its promotion of the embassy relocation legislation;

"5. The issue, also in the United States, of tax-exempt status for Israeli businesses;

"6. The significance of the issue to the religious community.

"It was agreed that there was a need to continue discussion and action concerning these issues.

"The group had two recommendations for NACC:

"1. That a time and place be set aside during next year's symposium for interfaith sharing and prayer for those who would find it meaningful. This could be in the morning before the regular session begins and thus would probably be held in a place other than the United Nations. It is hoped that members of the Palestinian and Israeli communities would be involved, where appropriate. This comes from the recognition that, for many in the religious community, how we perceive political reality and how we seek to change political reality comes out of our own spirituality and that many of us view our work as part of our relationship with God;

"2. That persons from the Mobilizing the Religious Community group be designated to coordinate, in cooperation with the NACC coordinator, a telecommunications and fax link, probably on ECUNET, to facilitate an ongoing connection with the religious community. This would include discussion and assistance in dealing with the issues named above, prayer concerns, information and resource sharing, and announcements of opportunities and events of interest, such as conferences and responsible Holy Land tours. It is also anticipated that, with this tool, it would be possible to reach out to other religious organizations not presently in this NGO community.

"Finally, with the assistance of members of the Methodist Federation for Social Action and the support of other groups represented at the Symposium, an attempt will be made to coordinate a national 'call in day' around the issue of Jerusalem."

ANNEX II

Message from Mr. Yasser Arafat, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization

It gives me pleasure to be able to convey to you, and through you to the peoples and countries of North America and all the peoples of the world, my deep gratitude and appreciation for your worthy and constructive endeavours in support of the efforts being made to secure a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in Palestine and the Middle East region as a whole. This is a region that has suffered much from the misfortunes of war, from flagrant violations of human rights and from the destruction and ruination of the infrastructure of the developing economies of its peoples so that they have been unable to keep pace with economic and social development in the rest of the world.

I place a high value on the generous and courageous positions you have maintained in your support of the Palestinian people and its just and legitimate struggle for the restoration and exercise of its imprescriptible national rights, and primarily its right to exercise self-determination on its own national soil and to establish an independent Palestinian State with its capital at Jerusalem.

I am also pleased to convey our deep thanks and great appreciation to the United Nations, to its Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, and to the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People. The Committee has undertaken to organize this Seminar at a critical and sensitive juncture, and this reflects the concern and responsibility felt by the international community with regard to the just cause of the Palestinian people and its persistent struggle for the restoration and exercise of its inalienable national rights. Those rights must be restored and exercised in accordance with the relevant United Nations resolutions, especially Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), which, in particular, do not sanction Israel's occupation of Palestinian and Arab territory, and in a manner in keeping with all of the resolutions condemning Israeli measures taken in the past, particularly those for the annexation and Judaization of occupied East Jerusalem and the subsequent measures taken by the Israeli military authorities to expropriate and seize Arab land and establish Jewish settlements on extensive areas of land in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

The Palestinian people has voluntarily and consciously chosen the road of peace. We shall maintain our commitment to this strategic choice with full determination and resolve within the framework of the agreements reached with the Israeli Government; and we shall, for our part, strive to implement the letter and spirit of those agreements.

The Palestinian people has begun to build up its own National Authority, and this Authority is making major efforts to build a national economy, reconstruct vital amenities, establish national institutions and achieve overall economic and social development. The Palestinian Authority has also assumed these tasks in order to improve the living conditions of a people that has endured, as it continues to endure, the continuing Israeli occupation of its territory and its Holy Places and the consequent killings, arrests and deportations, as well as the expropriation of Palestinian land, the daily violations of human rights and the destruction of the infrastructure of the economies of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip over the past decades.

The Palestinian people has been subjected to long and bitter years of a military occupation whose policies were targeted at rending the Palestinian social fabric and abolishing the national identity in order to preclude any possibility of genuine social development.

The economic policies of the occupation, such as the plunder and depletion of natural resources and the policies of subsuming and destroying the infrastructure of the Palestinian economy, have led to a situation of utter impoverishment for the Palestinian people and to the creation of a major catastrophe for employment in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. The fact that the right to self-determination stipulated in the Charter of the United Nations and endorsed by its resolutions has been withheld from the Palestinian people has deprived that people of the opportunity to develop its economic potential and social structures in the same manner as other peoples.

Despite the foregoing, the Palestinian people chose peace from the outset: a just and comprehensive peace based on a foundation of equality; a peace free of leanings towards hegemony and domination; a peace that will herald and build a new era in the region and will open wide the door to cooperation in all fields; a peace that will lead to genuine development in the social and economic fields for both Palestinian and Israeli peoples. It grieves and saddens me to say in this connection that none of this will take place if the peace process does not complete its course, particularly with respect to the full, speedy and meticulous implementation of the second part of the Declaration of Principles, including its provisions for the redeployment of the Israeli Army in the West Bank and for enabling the Palestinian people to hold free and fair elections. It will also remain impossible to achieve all the dimensions of peace that I have just mentioned without eliminating the mentality of domination and occupation that advocates continued resort to the policies of closure, isolation and collective punishment. In this context, I should like to call attention to Israeli settlement activity, which recently came to the fore in a dangerous manner with the seizure of Palestinian land adjacent to Jerusalem and within the Holy City itself and which so aroused the entire international community and the Security Council that Israel decided to suspend such activity but not to discontinue it.

It is this settlement activity that poses the greatest danger to the peace process, and it requires that the international community, NGOs and organizations of the United Nations system should bring pressure to bear for a halt to the implementation of Israeli settlement policies, for such policies to be rescinded and for the situation to be corrected so that there can be negotiations on all issues, including the settlements, in a positive atmosphere in which progress can be made.

At this difficult but historic time, we look for increased support, backing and assistance from the peoples of the world and, in particular, from the peoples, Governments and countries of North America. The present Seminar will most assuredly contribute to mobilizing capacities and strengthening effective international solidarity with the Palestinian people. The Palestinian people has chosen the road of peace in full awareness that the road will be long and arduous and knowing that the peace to which it aspires will require the efforts of all men of good will. I am fully confident that your devoted endeavours and the material and moral support you give us at this juncture will be such as to help achieve the aspirations of the Palestinian people for freedom, independence and national sovereignty.

On behalf of the Palestinian people, on behalf of my colleagues the members of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization and the members of the Palestinian National Authority, and on my own personal behalf, I reiterate our thanks and appreciation to you for your vital contribution to peace and wish you every success in your worthy and constructive endeavours.

Jointly and together, with the help of God, unto Jerusalem.

ANNEX III

North American Coordinating Committee for NGOs on the Question of Palestine, 1995-1996

Association of Arab-American University Graduates (AAUG) - United States

Canadian Autoworkers' Social Justice Fund (CAW) - Canada

Canadian Council of Churches (CCC) - Canada

Centre d'études arabes pour le développement (CEAD) - Canada

Episcopal Church - United States

Grassroots International - United States

Methodist Federation for Social Action (MFSA) - United States

Palestine Aid Society (PAS) - United States

Palestine Human Rights Campaign (PHRC) - United States

Pax World Service - United States

Presbyterian Church - United States

YWCA of the USA - United States

ANNEX IV

List of participants and observers

Participant NGOs

American Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee
American Association of Jurists
American Friends of Jerusalem (Neturei Karta)
American Friends Service Committee
American Jewish Alternatives to Zionism, Inc. (AJAZ)
American Society for Medical Aid
Americans for Middle East Understanding
Association of Arab-American University Graduates (AAUG)
Canadian Auto Workers Social Justice Fund
Canadian Council of Churches
Catholic Relief Services
Centre d'études arabes pour le développement (CEAD)
Church of Humanism
Council for the National Interest
Council of Masajid of USA, Inc.
Development Resource Center
The Episcopal Church
Federation of American-Arab Organizations
Grassroots International
Holy Land Foundation for Relief and Development
Institute for Global Communications
International Association of Educators for World Peace
International Committee for Arab-Israeli Reconciliation
International Jewish Peace Union (IJPU)
International Movement for Fraternal Unity Among Races and Peoples
Labor Committee on the Middle East
Louisville Committee for Israeli-Palestinian States
Lutheran World Federation
Mercy Corps International
Methodist Federation for Social Action
Middle East Fellowship of Southern California
Moral Rearmament
National Association of Arab Americans (NAAA)
National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA
Near East Cultural and Educational Foundation of Canada (NECEF)
Palestine Aid Society
Palestine Human Rights Campaign
Palestine Human Rights Information Center
Palestinian Mother's and Child's Care Society
Pax World Service
Presbyterian Church (USA)

Search for Justice and Equality in Palestine/Israel
Solidarity International for Human Rights (SIHR)
Union of Palestinian Women
Union of Palestinian Women Association in North America
United Holy Land Fund
United Methodist Office for the United Nations
Women's International League for Peace and Freedom
World Association of World Federalists
World Organization of Jews from Islamic Countries

Observer NGOs

Alternative Information Centre
Antiochian Orthodox Church
Association for World Education
Association Najdeh
Bethlehem Bible College
Canadian Labour Congress
Evangelicals for Middle East Understanding
Greek Committee for International Democratic Solidarity
Human Rights Watch/Middle East
Initiative for Peace and Cooperation in the Middle East
International Development Research Center
International Rescue Committee
Israeli Centre for International Cooperation (ICIC)
The Jerusalem Center for Biblical Studies
The Jerusalem Fund
Middle East Crisis Committee
Middle East Project on Safe Travel Sites
Palestinian Center for Human Rights
Palestinian Chamber of Congress
Parishioners for Peace
Red Crescent Society for Gaza Strip
Robert F. Kennedy Memorial Center
Roots (Palestinian Youth Organization)
United Methodist Seminar Program
Washington Line to the Middle East
Women in Black (Washington Area)
Women's Studies Centre
World Vision Relief and Development

Coordinating Committees for NGOs on the Question of Palestine

European Coordinating Committee for NGOs on the Question of Palestine (ECCP)
International Coordinating Committee for NGOs on the Question of Palestine (ICCP)
North American Coordinating Committee for NGOs (NACC)
Palestine Committee for NGOs

Panelists

Dr. Haider Abdel Shafi
Rev. Alex Awad
Mr. Larry Ekin
Mr. Avigdor Feldman
Ms. Maria Gazi
Ms. Suha Hindiyeh-Mani
Mr. Shafiq Masalha
Mr. Raji Sourani
Mr. Michael Warshawski
Ms. Leila Zachariah

Delegation of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People

Mr. Kéba Birane Cissé, Chairman
Permanent Representative of Senegal to the United Nations

Mr. Bruno Eduardo Rodríguez Parrilla, Vice-Chairman
Permanent Representative of Cuba to the United Nations

Mr. Rawan A. G. Farhadi, Vice-Chairman
Permanent Representative of Afghanistan to the United Nations

Mr. Joseph Cassar, Rapporteur
Permanent Representative of Malta to the United Nations

Mr. M. Nasser Al-Kidwa, Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations

Governments

Belarus	Mr. Alyaksei Skrypko
Brunei Darussalam	Mrs. Pengiran Basmillah Abbas
Guyana	Mr. Samuel R. Insanally Mrs. Paulette Cornette
India	Mr. Sujan R. Chinoy
Indonesia	Mr. R.M. Marty Natalegawa
Ireland	Dr. Niall Holohan
Mexico	Sra. Emma Rodríquez Sr. Julián Juárez
Morocco	Mr. Abdelhakim El Amrani
Saudi Arabia	H.H. Prince Mansour Al-Saud

Turkey	Mr. Hayati Güven
Ukraine	Mr. Anatoli M. Zlenko Mr. Yevhen V. Koziy

Organizations having received a standing invitation to participate as observers in the sessions and the work of the General Assembly and maintaining permanent observer missions at Headquarters

Palestine	Mr. Muin Shreim Ms. Sheila Jaghab

Intergovernmental organizations

League of Arab States	Mr. Ali Al-Salafi
Organization of the Islamic Conference	Mr. Abdelaziz Aboughosh

United Nations agencies

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)	Mr. Francis Dubois
United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat)	Mr. Abdoul Aziz Gueye
United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA)	Mr. William Lee